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Nota di contenuto	Defining Martial Arts -- Authenticity and Real Kungfu -- Kung Fu, Gongfu, Qigong, and Chinese Terminology in English -- Conclusion -- 1. From the Stone Age to the End of the Spring and Autumn Period -- Women in Warfare -- Changes in Warfare in the Shang Dynasty -- Archery -- The Dagger-Axe (Ge), Axe, and Spear -- Chariots -- Martial Dances -- Violence and Society -- Conclusion -- 2. The Warring States Period -- Swords and Swordsmanship -- Archery and Archery Contests -- Halberds (Ji) and Spears -- Unarmed Combat -- Knights-Errant and Assassins -- Conclusion -- 3. The Qin and Han Dynasties -- The First Emperor and His Would-Be Assassins -- Qin Dynasty Wrestling -- Xiang Yu and Liu Bang -- The Han Dynasty Hundred Events and Martial Arts -- Conclusion -- 4. The Six Dynasties -- The Northern and Southern Dynasties -- Women Martial Artists in the Six Dynasties --

Mulan -- The Return of Chinese Infantry -- Conclusion -- 5. The Sui and Tang Dynasties -- The Tang Military -- Martial Arts Training -- Women in Martial Arts Entertainment -- Monks and Bandits -- Military Exams -- Conclusion -- 6. The Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms and the Song Dynasty -- Archery -- Martial Arts Performances -- Weapons and Military Tests -- Conclusion -- 7. The Yuan Dynasty -- Mongol Martial Arts -- Archery -- Weapons -- Wrestling and Boxing -- Li Quan -- Conclusion -- 8. The Ming Dynasty -- The Ming Military -- Shaolin Temple -- Boxing -- Fencing with Swords -- Fencing with Long Swords -- Spear Techniques -- Staff Fighting -- Conclusion -- 9. The Qing Dynasty -- Ming Loyalists -- Internal versus External Martial Arts -- Self-Cultivation -- Shaolin -- Taiji, Bagua, Xingyi -- Rebellions -- Conclusion -- 10. Post-Imperial China -- The Chinese Nation and Republican China -- 1949 -- 1978 to the Present -- Conclusion -- Conclusion -- Martial Arts in Academia -- To Close.

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### Sommario/riassunto

In the global world of the twenty-first century, martial arts are practised for self-defense and sporting purposes only. However, for thousands of years, they were a central feature of military practice in China and essential for the smooth functioning of society. This book, which opens with an intriguing account of the very first female martial artist, charts the history of combat and fighting techniques in China from the Bronze Age to the present. This broad panorama affords fascinating glimpses into the transformation of martial skills, techniques and weaponry against the background of Chinese history, the rise and fall of empires, their governments and their armies. Quotations from literature and poetry, and the stories of individual warriors, infuse the narrative, offering personal reflections on prowess in the battlefield and techniques of engagement. This is an engaging and readable introduction to the authentic history of Chinese martial arts.

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